

MILTON

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Milton by John Bailey

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MILTON

BY

JOHN BAILEY

AUTHOR OF "THE CLAIMS OF FRENCH
POETRY," "DR. JOHNSON AND HIS
CIRCLE," ETC.

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CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I INTRODUCTORY	7
II MILTON'S LIFE AND CHARACTER	23
III THE EARLIER POEMS	89
IV <i>PARADISE LOST</i>	142
V <i>PARADISE REGAINED</i> AND <i>SAMSON AGONISTES</i>	196
BIBLIOGRAPHY	250
INDEX	254

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful golliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

WORDSWORTH.

O Mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armouries,
Tower, as the deep-doomed empyrean
Rings to the roar of an angel onset—
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

TENNYSON.

MILTON

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

WHEN a man spends a day walking in hilly country he is often astonished at the new shape taken on by a mountain when it is looked at from a new point of view. Sometimes the change is so great as to make it almost unrecognizable. He who has seen Snowdon from Capel-Curig is reluctant to admit that what he sees from Llanberis is the same mountain: he who has seen the Langdale Pikes from Glaramara is amazed at their beauty as he gazes at them from the garden at Low Wood. These are extreme cases. But to a less degree every traveller among the mountains is experiencing the same thing all day. He finds the eternal hills the most plastic of forms. At each change in his own position there is a change in the shape of a mountain under which he is passing. He may keep his eye fixed upon it but insensibly, as he watches, the long